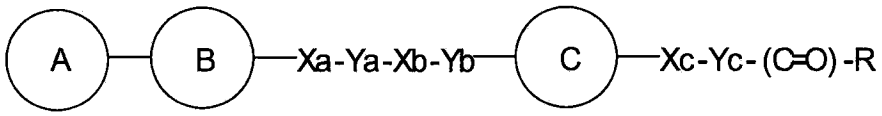
**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A compound represented by the formula



(I)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole ~~a 1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, -$SO_2$-, -CO-, -CS-, -$CR^1(OR^2)$-, -$NR^3$-, -$CONR^3$- or -$NR^3CO$- ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc~~

~~are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

provided that,

(1) ~~when the 1,2-azole ring represented by ring B is pyrazole,~~ ring C is not thiadiazole or oxadiazole;

~~(2) when the 1,2-azole ring represented by ring B is isoxazole, ring C is not an optionally substituted pyridone;~~ and

(2~~3~~) when ~~the 1,2-azole ring represented by ring B is pyrazole and~~ Xa and Xb are each a bond, ring C is not a benzene ring,

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof.

2. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein the ring represented by ring A is an aromatic ring.

3. (Original) The compound of claim 2, wherein the aromatic ring is a benzene ring, a pyridine ring or a pyridazine ring.

4. Canceled.

5. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein the substituent that ring B is optionally further having is a hydrocarbon group.

6. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein the substituent that ring B is optionally further having is an alkoxy group.

7. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein Ya is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene or $C_{2-6}$ alkenylene.

8. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 1, wherein Xb is -O-, -S-, -SO-, $-SO_2-$, -CO-, -CS-, $-CR^1(OR^2)-$, $-NR^3-$, $-CONR^3-$ or $-NR^3CO-$ ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents).

9. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein the monocyclic aromatic ring represented by ring C is a benzene ring.

10. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein the monocyclic aromatic ring represented by ring C is pyrazole.

11. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group).

12. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein Xa is a bond.

13. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein Xb is -O-.

14. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein Yb is a bond.

15. (Original) The compound of claim 1, wherein Xc is a bond or -O-.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 1, which is ~~3-[1-phenyl-3-(4-{3-[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-5-isoxazolyl}butoxy)-1H-pyrazol-5-yl]propionic acid;~~
2-[3-(3-{3-ethoxy-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)phenoxy]-2-methylpropionic acid;
3-[2-ethoxy-4-(3-{3-ethoxy-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)phenyl]propionic acid;
3-[3-(3-{3-ethoxy-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-1-phenyl-1H-pyrazol-5-yl]propionic acid;

[1-phenyl-3-(4-{3-propyl-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}butoxy)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acetic acid;

[2-(3-{3-isopropyl-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-3-methoxyphenyl]acetic acid;

[2-(3-{3-(1-ethylpropyl)-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-3-methoxyphenyl]acetic acid;

(2-{3-[1-(5-chloro-2-pyridyl)-3-(1-ethylpropyl)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]propoxy}-3-methoxyphenyl)acetic acid;

[3-ethyl-2-(3-{3-isopropyl-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)phenyl]acetic acid;

[2-(3-{3-isopropyl-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-3-methoxyphenyl]acetic acid;

[3-(3-{3-isopropyl-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-1-methyl-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acetic acid;

[1-ethyl-5-(3-{3-isopropyl-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acetic acid;

[1-ethyl-5-(3-{3-propyl-1-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]acetic acid;

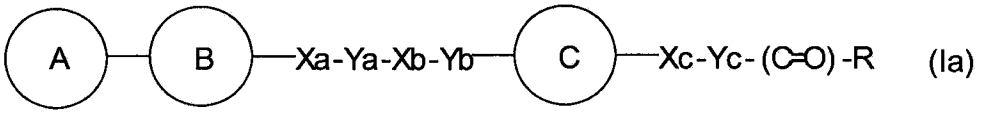
(2-{3-[1-(5-bromo-2-pyridinyl)-3-(1-ethylpropyl)-1H-pyrazol-4-yl]propoxy}-3-methoxyphenyl)acetic acid; or

[2-(3-{3-tert-butyl-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]-1H-pyrazol-4-yl}propoxy)-3-methylphenyl]acetic acid.

18. (Currently amended) A prodrug of the compound of claim 1 or a pharmacologically acceptable salt of the prodrug of the compound of claim 1 ~~thereof~~.

19. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the compound of claim 1 or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent.

20. (Currently amended) A method~~pharmaceutical composition~~ for the ~~prophylaxis or~~ treatment of ~~diabetes~~ type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes or gestational diabetes, which comprises administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole~~a 1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, -$SO_2$-, -CO-, -CS-, -$CR^1(OR^2)$-, -$NR^3$-, -$CONR^3$- or -$NR^3CO$- ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an

optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

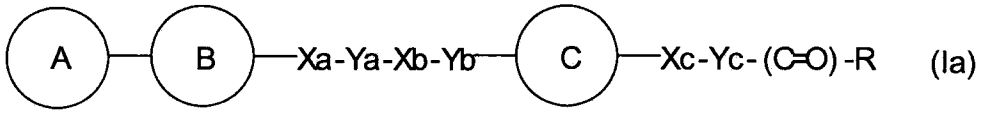
Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

21. (Currently amended) A method~~pharmaceutical composition~~ for the ~~prophylaxis or~~ treatment of hyperlipidemia in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole~~a 1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, -$SO_2$-, -CO-, -CS-, -$CR^1(OR^2)$-, -$NR^3$-, -$CONR^3$- or -$NR^3CO$- ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb~~ and Yc~~

~~are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

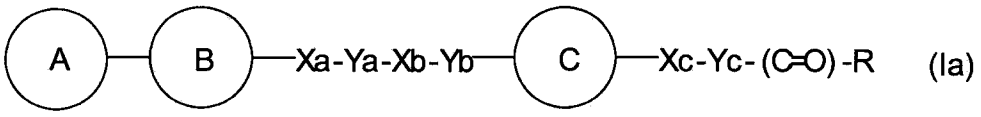
ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) A method~~pharmaceutical composition~~ for the ~~prophylaxis or~~ treatment of impaired glucose tolerance in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole~~a 1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, $-SO_2-$, -CO-, -CS-, $-CR^1(OR^2)-$, $-NR^3-$, $-CONR^3-$ or $-NR^3CO-$ ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a

formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

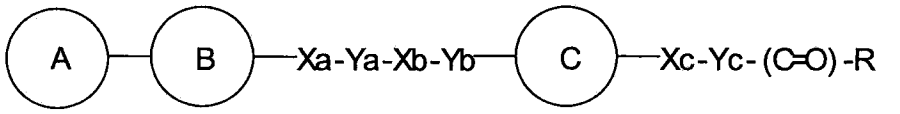
ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

24. (Currently amended) A method~~pharmaceutical composition~~ for regulating~~which is a~~ retinoid-related receptor function ~~regulating agent~~ in a mammal in

need thereof, which comprises administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole~~a 1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, -$SO_2$-, -CO-, -CS-, -$CR^1(OR^2)$-, -$NR^3$-, -$CONR^3$- or -$NR^3CO$- ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc~~

~~are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

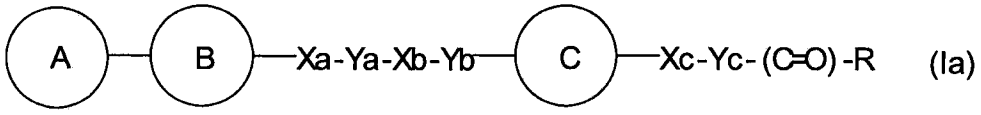
Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

25. (Currently amended) The method~~agent~~ of claim 24, wherein~~which~~ the compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, $-SO_2-$, -CO-, -CS-, $-CR^1(OR^2)-$, $-NR^3-$, $-CONR^3-$ or $-NR^3CO-$ ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group

selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

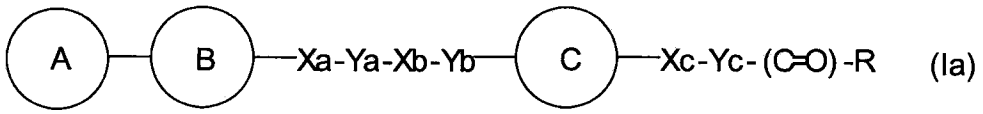
Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring)

is a peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor ligand.

26. (Currently amended) The methodagent of claim 24, whereinwhich the compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, $-SO_2-$, -CO-, -CS-, $-CR^1(OR^2)-$, $-NR^3-$, $-CONR^3-$ or $-NR^3CO-$ ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

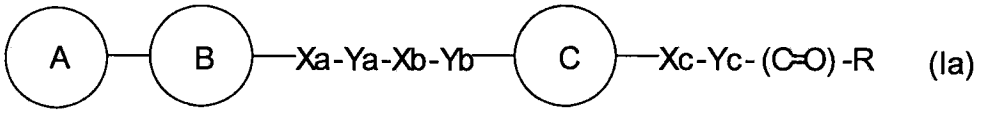
Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring)

is a retinoid X receptor ligand.

27. (Currently amended) A methodpharmaceutical composition for improvingwhich is an insulin resistance in a mammal in need thereof improving agent, which comprises administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazolea 1,2-azole ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, $-SO_2-$, -CO-, -CS-, $-CR^1(OR^2)-$, $-NR^3-$, $-CONR^3-$ or $-NR^3CO-$ ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an

optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc~~

~~are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

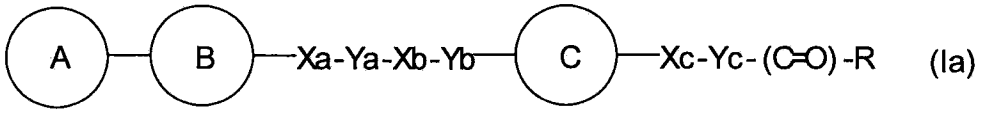
ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

28-29. Canceled.

30. (Currently amended) A method~~pharmaceutical composition which is~~ for modulating a GPR40 receptor function ~~modulator~~ in a mammal in need thereof which comprises~~ing~~ administering to the mammal a compound represented by the formula



(Ia)

wherein

ring A is a ring optionally having 1 to 3 substituents;

ring B is pyrazole~~1,2-azole ring~~ optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents;

Xa, Xb and Xc

are the same or different and each is a bond, -O-, -S-, -SO-, -$SO_2$-, -CO-, -CS-, -$CR^1(OR^2)$-, -$NR^3$-, -$CONR^3$- or -$NR^3CO$- ($R^1$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, $R^2$ is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxy-protecting group selected from a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl group, a phenyl group, a trityl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl group, a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a 2-tetrahydropyranyl group, a 2-tetrahydrofuranyl group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents, and $R^3$ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an amino-protecting group selected from a formyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{1-6}$ alkoxy-carbonyl group, a benzoyl group, a $C_{7-10}$ aralkyl-carbonyl group, a $C_{7-14}$ aralkyloxy-carbonyl group, a trityl group, a phthaloyl group, an N,N-dimethylaminomethylene group, a silyl group or a $C_{2-6}$ alkenyl group, optionally having 1 to 3 substituents);

Ya is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

Yb ~~and Yc~~

~~are the same or different and each~~ is a bond or a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon residue having 1 to 20 carbon atoms;

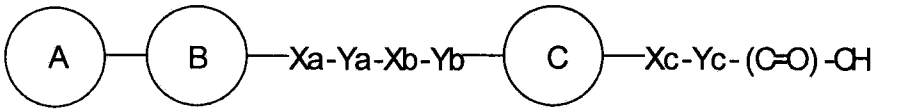
Yc is $C_{1-6}$ alkylene;

ring C is a monocyclic aromatic ring optionally further having 1 to 3 substituents; and

R represents $-OR^4$ ($R^4$ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group) or $-NR^5R^6$ ($R^5$ and $R^6$ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group, or $R^5$ and $R^6$ form, together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring),

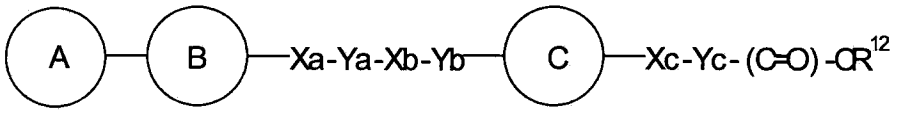
or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof~~, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent~~.

31. (Previously presented) A method of producing a compound represented by the formula



(I-5)

wherein the symbols in the formula are as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, which comprises subjecting a compound represented by the formula



(I-4)

wherein $R^{12}$ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and other symbols are as defined above, or a salt thereof to a hydrolysis reaction.

32-33. Canceled.